REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

The rejection of claims 10-13 and 16 over Clement et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,429,342); and the rejection of claims 10, 14, and 15 over Clement et al. in view of Kosmin et al. (U.S. Patent No. 2,508,036) are respectfully traversed and obviated by amendment.

The references, alone or in combination, do not describe or suggest the claimed process for preparing an alkoxylate, which comprises bringing at least one **alkylene oxide** into contact with at least one **monofunctional linear or singly or multiply branched alcohol having from 10 to 15 carbon atoms** in the presence of at least one **double metal cyanide compound** of the general formula (I) at a temperature of from 130°C to 155°C. (Presently Amended claim 10). (Emphasis added).

Clement et al. generally describes the ethoxylation of various initiator compounds, which is performed in the presence of metal cyanide catalysts. The catalysts form a wide variety of polyether products that in most cases contain only small amounts of high molecular weight poly(ethyleneoxide). (See abstract of the reference). Clement et al. also describes a process for preparing a polyether, comprising forming a mixture of an initiator compound having one or more oxyalkylatable groups, ethylene oxide and a metal cyanide catalyst complex, and subjecting a mixture to conditions sufficient to ethoxylate the oxyalkylatable groups of the initiator. (See column 2, lines 29-34 of the reference).

However, according to Clement et al., suitable initiator compounds (starter compounds) only include monoalcohols such as methanol, ethanol, n-propanol, isopropanol, n-butanol, isobutanol, t-butanol, 1-t-butoxy-2-propanol, 2-methyl-2-propanol, octanol, octadecanol, hydroxylacrylates and methacrylates, polyalcohol initiators such as ethylene glyçol, propylene glycol, various sugars, and polyether polyols having an equivalent weight of from about 125 up to about 1000. (See column 4, line 66 to column 5, line 15 of the reference). In particular, Clement et al. only recites suitable initiator compounds that are

chosen from short chain monoalcohols having 1 to 8 C-atoms, long chain alcohols having 18 C-atoms, hydroxyalkyl acrylates and methacrylates, polyalcohols and polyether polyols having a molecular weight of from 125 to 1000, which do not include the presently claimed starter compounds chosen from monofunctional linear or singly or multiply branched alcohols having from 10 to 15 carbon atoms. As such, the reference clearly does not describe the presently claimed invention.

Moreover, there is no suggestion in the reference to provide a process having the claimed starter compounds, since the reference exemplifies and describes the preferred use of compounds such as poly(propylene oxide) having a molecular weight of 700, 2-methyl-3-buten-2-ol, or 2-methyl-3-butyn-2-ol. (See Examples 1-14 of the reference). In particular, the reference illustrates the advantage of using of starter compounds that are chosen from polyether compounds having a *very high* molecular weight of 700 or a compound having a *low* molecular weight and having an unsaturated functionality in the molecule, such as substituted butyne. Therefore, there is no evidentiary support nor any motivation for one to modify the reference's disclosure to achieve the claimed invention.

The Kosmin et al. reference does not cure the deficiencies of Clement et al.

Kosmin et al. generally describes a process for the preparation of alkoxylates of 2-n-propyl-heptanol, being alkoxylated with at least 5 mols but less than 16 mols of ethylene oxide. (See column 1, lines 19-22 of the reference). According to the examples of Kosmin et al., the alkoxylation reaction is catalyzed by a solid base like KOH. (See Examples 1-3 at columns 2-3 of the reference).

However, Kosmin et al. does not describe or suggest the use of the double metal cyanide catalysts according to formula (I) of the claimed invention, providing improved reaction rates, improved conversion, improved catalyst stability, and a shortened induction

time of the reaction. (See amended claim 1, and the present specification at page 2, lines 28-30).

Moreover, it is noted that Kosmin et al. does not describe or provide any evidentiary support for the alkoxylation of 2-n-propyl-heptanol *in the presence of a double metal cyanide catalyst* according to the claimed invention. Furthermore, Clement et al., as discussed above, does not describe or suggest that any double metal cyanide catalyst described therein can advantageously be used for the alkoxylation of monofunctional linear or singular multiply branched alcohols having from 10 to 15 carbon atoms, as presently claimed. In addition, other than hindsight of the present specification, there is no evidence or suggestion that one would be motivated to modify or substitute the compounds in manner that achieves the claims invention.

Therefore, the claimed invention is novel and unobvious over the above-cited references. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections is requested.

Applicants submit that added claims 17-21 are also novel and unobvious over the cited references, since these claims depend directly or indirectly from claim 10 and the references do not describe or suggest the features of these claims.

Applicants request that the provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection of claims 10-16 over claims 1-4 of copending Application No. 10/528,414 in view of Clement et al. be held in abeyance until allowable subject matter is indicated.

Respectfully submitted,

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